

GAYLORD CROSSETTE HALL, 1871-1954

Gaylord C. Hall, former member of the New York Entomological Society and its treasurer from 1929 to 1936 died in a convalescent home in Quakertown, Pennsylvania on March 21, 1954. For the following facts about Mr. Hall's parents, his youth, his travels and business interests, I am greatly indebted to his brother Robert W. Hall of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

Gaylord, who was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, on January 26, 1871, was one of three brothers, the others being Robert William, born in 1872 and Norman Fisher, born in 1878. Their father was Ephraim Gaylord Hall, a graduate, at the age of 18, from the University of Michigan from which he also received his M.A., in 1866. Following his graduation he, with other classmates, volunteered in a Michigan regiment as a private and finally became a captain. In the Battle of Stone-River he was left for dead on the battlefield after a musket ball had passed through his neck. After recovery he was put in Libby Prison for three months until exchanged, whereupon he returned to the Union Army, serving until the end of the war.

Captain Hall married Alice Cogswell Crossette daughter of Rev. Robert Crossette and Dorothea Fisher Crossette in 1869. While a young girl Alice C. Crossette was supervisor of music for the Cincinnati public schools, and in addition to being an artist she wrote and illustrated many magazine articles, and was the author of one novel. Owing to the moves of his parents Gaylord during his boyhood attended schools at Cincinnati, Kent, Hockingport, and Cincinnati again, all in Ohio, and Washington, D.C. It was at Hockingport, a small village on the Ohio River that Gaylord, aged 10, and his brother Robert became interested in butterflies, an interest that remained with them for practically their whole lives.

About 1875 their father Captain Hall began to suffer from the wound that he had received during the Battle of Stone-River. This was thought to have completely healed but an injury to the base of the brain developed and spread until the Captain became physically and mentally helpless. This culminated in his death in 1881.

In 1885, Mrs. Hall, perhaps in view of her interest in art and literature, took her sons to Europe on a visit originally planned for two years but that lengthened into five. Christmas was spent on the ocean and after reaching Hamburg they went on to Heidelberg where they lived for the winter. The boys attended the Realschule and got their first German lessons. Later Gaylord and Robert attended the same schools and engaged more or less in the same activities, their brother Norman being too young. In the words of Robert Hall, their arrival in Heidelberg coincided with "the gorgeous celebration of the five hundredth anniversary of the founding of the University. But tragedy lurked in Heidelberg; it was so damp that drops of water collected on the walls and they did not glimpse the sun for twenty-one days, with the result that Gaylord developed tuberculosis of one lung. Even after he recovered it had an effect on his later life in that, fearing recurrence, he decided he must never marry, and he never did. The immediate result was doctor's orders for them to move to the most noted resort of those suffering from tuberculosis, Davos, in German Switzerland. September, 1886 found them there. The village itself is almost as high as the top of Mount Washington, with peaks about it up to ten and eleven thousand feet. They thought they faced a year but it stretched out to a winter, a summer and another winter.

"The second winter Gay was allowed to attend a regular school and he and his brother Robert went to a noted one, run by Germans, the Friederichsianum (see Thomas Mann's "The Magic Mountain"). In summer there were butterfly and plant collecting and some mountain climbing (moderate on Gay's part). In winter there were sledding and skating. Below the village was a moderate sized rink, freshly flooded each night by a mountain stream. On sunny days they skated in straw hats! A picture of that rink recently appeared in 'Life'; it is now the world's largest and of worldwide fame.

"In May, 1888 they left Davos. And what an experience that was, seeing spring rush on them as they were driven down the mountain side. When they passed the lake (Davoser See) it was frozen over and there was plenty of snow about, but when they arrived at Lucerne

that evening the blackbirds were singing among the blossoms of the horse chestnut trees.

"They did not stay long in Lucerne, but moved for the summer to Gersau, a quaint little village, by the way, mentioned in Schiller's "William Tell." In the autumn they went to Vevey and then to Montreaux, where they attended the "College de Montreaux." Their apartment was on the shore of the lake with the Castle in full view and of course they made frequent visits and saw the deep path in the solid stone made by the naked feet of poor Bonivard as described in Byron's "Castle of Chillon."

"That brings us to the early summer of 1889 when they went to Champéry, a typical French-Swiss village in a valley at the base of the Dent du Midi.

"In the fall it was on to Paris and a term in the Lycé Janson de Sailly, a rather prominent municipal school. Their apartment was on the Avenue Victor Hugo, diagonally across from Hugo's home. Unfortunately he had been dead some two years. The Arc de Triomphe was only about a half block away and still better, the Bois de Boulogne was near enough to afford an almost country playground. A real bit of luck was that their arrival coincided with the opening of the great international exposition of 1889 and the completion of the Eiffel Tower. In the summer of 1890 there were some weeks at Ostend, with a few day's trip to England and then back to America! Gay then busied himself in electrical concerns and then entered the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with the class of '96."

Later he went to Chicago with the Metropolitan Elevated Railway, with Stone and Webster of Boston, the Boston Elevated Railway, the Manhattan Railway Company, and The Interborough Rapid Transit Company of New York where he was superintendent of motive power and had a staff of over ninety men and women. In the mid-thirties he entered the National Arts Club where he lived among a wide circle of friends for nearly the balance of his life. For some years he was chairman of the House Committee. His interest in art, literature, etc., is indicated by his membership in the Salmagundi Club, the Com-

monwealth Club of Montclair, the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Shakespeare, McDowell and Technology clubs, Water Color Society, The American Museum of Natural History, and the American Institute of Electrical Engineers.

After his retirement around 1941, his main hobby was his interest in his great grandfather, Jonathan Fisher, father of Dorothea Fisher Crossette, and versatile clergyman of Blue Hill, Maine. He made many visits to the small sea-side village and published two pamphlets about his ancestor. Dr. Mary Ellen Chase dedicated her book "Jonathan Fisher, Maine Parson" to Gaylord C. Hall and stated that without his help she could not have written it.

As has been stated Mr. Hall's interest in butterflies began when he was a boy of ten. He was an active member of the local collecting group during his residence in New York City and made collecting trips with Frank E. Watson, another lepidopterist who was on the staff of The American Museum of Natural History. According to Dr. A. B. Klots, he was probably the first of the New York collectors to get an automobile. Watson recorded in one of his notebooks his first collecting trip via automobile to Lake Hopatcong, N.J., with Mr. Hall. Dr. Klots also recalls that inspired by the descriptions and painting of Carl Rungius, who was a friend, Hall was the first to collect butterflies in the wild interior country at timberline in the Wind River Range, Wyoming. Among other things he found there *Boloria pales* (Denis & Schiffermueller) a circumpolar butterfly not previously known from North America south of Alaska. Dr. Klots visited the same place in 1939 and took a very large series which he named *Boloria pales halli*. Cook and Watson named an aberration of *Limenitis archippus floridensis halli* after him and he himself named *Nymphalis j-album* subsp. *watsoni* and *Lycæna epixanthe* subsp. *phædrus*, the latter now generally considered a subjective synonym of *amicetus* Scudder. The types are in The American Museum of Natural History, to which his collection of butterflies went. This included many local specimens as well as some very valuable material of his own and other peoples' collecting in Europe, Canada, and the West.

Cyril F. dos Passos communicated with Mr. Hall in 1935 about

Argynnis but it was only from 1947 on that he met him occasionally at The American Museum of Natural History. As a result of these meetings Mr. dos Passos purchased some spread butterflies and papered material that Mr. Hall had collected mostly in Wyoming and a few in Newfoundland and British Columbia, as well as some by well-known, old collectors, also three specimens of *Oeneis aello* that Hall had collected when a boy of 16 in Switzerland, and in addition an interesting aberration of *Lycaena bypophlaeas* collected by him at Woods Hole, Massachusetts. Some of the material received by dos Passos was turned over to the Museum as a donation from Hall.

Herbert F. Schwarz, of The American Museum of Natural History, knew Mr. Hall over many years and within recent ones he would drop into Mr. Schwarz's office for a friendly visit and to talk over old times. My own contacts with Mr. Hall were business rather than entomological ones. As treasurer of the New York Entomological Society, he paid the bills that I incurred as editor of the Society's Journal. Mr. Hall succeeded the late William T. Davis as treasurer of the Society and of course they knew each other quite well. "Willie" T. Davis a well-known, versatile naturalist and historian of Staten Island was quite bald on the top of his head and in the middle of the bald patch a wart reposed. This excrescence annoyed Mr. Davis and he decided to get rid of it. Not, however, by visiting a physician, but by enlisting the aid of Gaylord C. Hall, who put a binocular microscope without a stage on top of "Willie's" head and neatly sliced off the offending wart with a sharp scalpel. This little operation probably took place in the attic of the Museum of the Staten Island Institute of Arts and Sciences, where Mr. Davis held forth surrounded by his natural history collections. It is not known if the head and scalpel were sterilized before the excision but no ill effects followed.

Mr. Hall attended the meetings of the New York Entomological Society quite regularly, as I recall, and was a contemporary of the older entomologists, many of whom died before Mr. Hall. If they were alive, I am sure they could add to this account many recollections of his entomological activities. Personally, I recall Mr. Hall as a very

pleasant, rather quiet and friendly gentleman, of slight build, with various interests aside from his butterflies. My last correspondence with him took place when he was working on his "Supplement to the Biographical Sketch of the Rev. Jonathan Fisher", and dealt with "metamorphoses", popular among children a hundred and fifty years ago.

Mr. Hall was hospitalized during the Christmas holidays of 1948. In 1951 he suffered from a coronary thrombosis and had a long siege in a hospital. According to his brother Robert, he made a fair recovery but had to be careful about his exercise. During the latter part of 1953 he had several hospitalizations because his condition became worse. In January 1954, he was so weakened that his doctor advised constant care and so on January 30, 1954 his brother Robert had him removed from the hospital in New York City to his own home in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and then to a convalescent home in Quakertown, Pennsylvania, that was close enough for Robert to pay him frequent visits. After lingering on for nearly two months, Gaylord C. Hall died in the early morning of March 21. He was buried in the Nisky Hill Cemetery of Bethlehem. Mr. Hall's publications that I know about, are listed below. As no extended search has been made he may have been the author of others.

Distribution of *Argynnis atlantis* and *Aproditis*. Jour. N.Y. Ent. Soc., 21:162. 1913.

Limenitis ursula var. *albo fasciata*. Jour. N.Y. Ent. Soc., 24:93. 1916.

Aglais j-album Boisduval and Leconte. Jour. N.Y. Ent. Soc., 29:57. 1921.

Notes on *Polygonia j-album*, *Cercyonis alope*, *Phyciodes tharos*, *Heodes epixanthe* and *Euphydryas gilletti*. Jour. N.Y. Ent. Soc., 32:109-111. 1924.

Biographical Sketch of the Rev. Jonathan Fisher of Blue Hill, Maine, 1768-1847. New York, N. Y. 1945. 20p. 15 plates. Privately printed.

Supplement to the Biographical Sketch of the Rev. Jonathan Fisher of Blue Hill, Maine. New York, N. Y. 1946. 22 pages. frontispiece and 2 plates. Privately printed.

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